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I. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please enter the following claim amendments into the file of this Application. A complete listing of all claims under examination in the Application is provided below along with each claim's status, which is indicated in a parenthetical expression. For claim amendments, deleted matter is indicated by strike-out text and added matter is indicated by underlined text.

1. (currently amended) An Internet based system for facilitating commercial transactions between producers of agricultural commodities and intermediaries who purchase agricultural commodities from the producers, comprising:

a first computing sub-system configured to receive electronic communications from an intermediary;

a memory associated with the first computing sub-system ~~wherein the memory includes information relating to the intermediary including~~ comprising an agricultural commodity desired to be purchased, a quantity of the agricultural commodity desired to be purchased, and a basis price for the agricultural commodity desired to be purchased, ~~wherein the communications received from the intermediary will selectively affect the information relating to the~~ intermediary;

a second computing sub-system operatively coupled to the first computing subsystem and the memory, the second computing sub-system configured to selectively request data from a commodities exchange, wherein the data includes a current trading price of the commodity;

a third computing subsystem operatively coupled to the first and second computing sub-systems configured to generate at least a portion of a web page specific to the intermediary based upon the information stored in the memory and the data obtained from the commodities exchange, wherein the ~~second~~ third computing subsystem ~~can transmit~~ comprises means for transmitting the web page to a producer of an agricultural commodity, wherein the web page includes the quantity of the agricultural commodity desired to be purchased by the intermediary, and a flat price for the commodity wherein the third computing subsystem ~~calculates~~ comprises means for calculating the flat price by adding the basis provided by the intermediary from the current trading price obtained from the commodities exchange; and

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a fourth computing sub-system operatively coupled to the first, second and third computing sub-systems, the fourth computing subsystem configured ~~with~~ to receive means for receiving responses from producers indicating an ability to deliver an available quantity of the commodity to the intermediary and ~~to communicate means for receiving~~ with the commodities exchange on behalf of the intermediary in order to attempt to obtain a futures contract for the commodity in an amount as close as possible to (within pre-set parameters), but not exceeding the available quantity and ~~to generate~~ means for generating a contract between the producer and the intermediary.

2. (original) The system of claim 1 wherein the second computing subsystem periodically requests updated information about the current trading price of the commodity.

3. (original) The system of claim 2 wherein the periodic requests occur at a rate to generate a near real-time correlation to the trading price as posted by the commodities exchange.

4. (original) The system of claim 3 wherein the web page made available to the producer is updated so as to provide a near real time correlation between fluctuations occurring on the commodities exchange and a resulting change in the flat price.

5-14 (canceled).

15. (withdrawn) A method of facilitating commercial transactions between a first class of participants and a second class of participants, utilizing a system having a centralized electronic information exchange, accessible to the first class of participants wherein information specifically pertaining to each of the second class of participants is available, and members of the second class of participants have limited access to the system to provide and update the information that specifically pertains to the members, comprising: obtaining pricing data from a centralized source; receiving bids from the second class of participants, wherein a posted offer is generated by the system based in part on the information provided and in part based upon the data obtained; displaying the generated offer on the centralized electronic information exchange; receiving a response from a given member of the first class of participants to the generated offer

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for a given member of the second class of participants; communicating with the centralized source to attempt to generate a hedging transaction on behalf of the given member of the second class of participants; and generating a contract between the given member of the first class of participants and the given member of the second class of participants

16. (withdrawn) The method of claim 15 wherein the contract is generated without requiring further input from the given member of the first class of participants or the given member of the second class of participants.

17. (withdrawn) The method of claim 15 wherein the centralized source is a commodities exchange and the hedging transaction is an attempt to sell a futures contract on the commodities exchange.

18. (withdrawn) The method of claim 15 wherein the first class of participants are producers of a commodity and the first party patrons are purchasers of the commodity.

19. (withdrawn) The method of claim 15, further comprising: resubmitting a request for the pricing data from the centralized source at a periodic interval; and recalculating the generated offer based upon the most recent pricing data.

20. (withdrawn) The method of claim 19 where the request is continuously resubmitted so as to receive at least near real time pricing data from the centralized source.

21. (withdrawn) A system for facilitating commercial transactions between first parties and second parties, comprising: a first computing subsystem configured to receive information from one first party, sufficient to generate an offer for specified quantities of an item, to display the offer upon request, and to interact with one second party on behalf of the one first party to generate a contract for an amount of the item without requiring further interaction from the one first party; a second computing sub-system operatively coupled to the first computing subsystem and configured to automatically communicate with a centralized exchange to initiate the placement of a hedging order on behalf of the one first party.

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22. (withdrawn) The system of claim 21 wherein the hedging order is a futures contract to sell a quantity of the item as close to, without exceeding the amount of the item.

23. (withdrawn) A server based system for facilitating transactions between buyers of a commodity and sellers of a commodity, comprising: a server system configured to receive input from one or more buyers including information relating to a quantity of a commodity desired and a basis price, to communicate with a commodities exchange to obtain pricing information relating to the commodity, to calculate a flat price for each buyer based on the provided basis price and the obtained pricing information, to provide the calculated flat price and an offer associated with it to a seller when requested, to periodically communicate with the commodities exchange to update the pricing information, to receive responses from a given seller indicating an acceptance of a given offer from a given buyer, to communicate with the commodities exchange on behalf of the given buyer to attempt to sell a futures contract based on the given offer, and to generate a contract between the given seller and the given buyer.

24. (withdrawn) A method for allowing a purchaser of a commodity to post information relating to bids to purchase commodities on a system and to have the system act on behalf of the purchaser in contracting with a seller of the commodity and in contracting with a futures commission merchant to obtain a futures contract, comprising: determining a quantity of a commodity to purchase; determining a basis price for the commodity; and posting the quantity and the basis price on a system configured to obtain a current trading price for the commodity from a commodities exchange, determine a flat price based on the basis price and the trading price, deliver the determined price and the quantity to the seller, receive an offer from the seller, initiate communication with the futures commission merchant and negotiate a futures contract, and generate a contract between the purchaser and the seller.